

ground; in No. 2, he is apparently about to commence another throw. He prefers to carry out this game on a hard surface and I think in the natural state these animals use this method for opening shellfish. The force used in crashing the stone or other object on the ground is really astonishing and to stand behind him when he is playing this game on a hard surface may lead to a severe bruise on the shin. He spends most of his time feeling under stones and crevices with his paws from which I gather his main diet is frogs.

MOULMEIN,

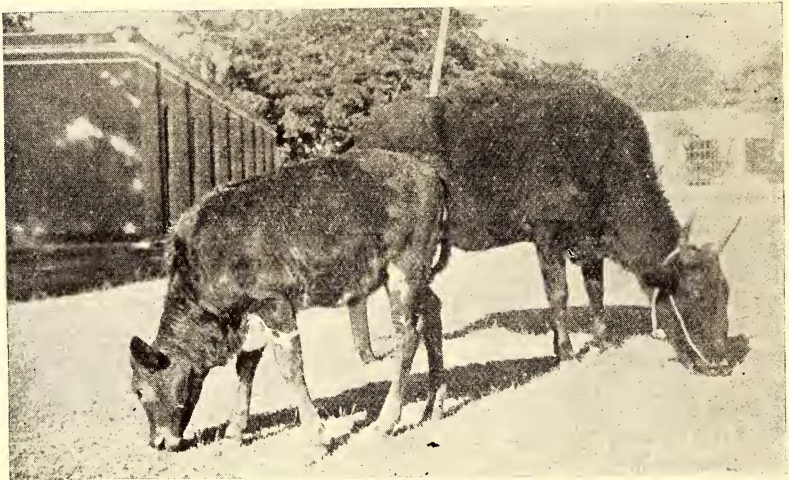
January 11, 1940.

A. L'E. BROWNLOW,

Dist. Supt. of Police.

[The subject of the note is the Crab-eating Mongoose, *Herpestes urva*, which is found in the South Eastern Himalayas, Assam, Arakan, Pegu, and Tenasserim. Compared with other species of Mongoose it is exceptionally heavy in build, a character associated with its distinctive habits. Very little has been recorded about the habits of this animal. Blanford, quoting Hodgson, states that it is somewhat aquatic and lives chiefly on frogs and crabs which abound in the Himalayan and Burmese streams. The habit displayed by this mongoose of sitting up with any hard object in its hands and dashing it violently on the ground is probably an indication of its customary way of dealing with hard-shelled crabs and molluscs upon which it feeds. Like other species, it lives in holes in the ground. In this species, the anal glands are about the size of a cherry and the animal has the power of squirting out a foetid fluid from them backwards with great force.—EDS.]

VIII.—HYBRID AMERICAN BISON AND INDIAN DOMESTIC COW.



The enclosed photo of a cow and her young one may interest you. The cow is by an American bison from an ordinary cow.

Then she was served by a Watussi bull and the young one is the result. Also I am enclosing a separate photo of the young one.

SADEG Z. SHAH,

Assistant Secretary to His Highness

the Maharaja of Mysore, Mysore.

THE PALACE,
BANGALORE.

February 8, 1940.

IX.—WHALES IN BARODA, WITH NOTES ON THE
ANATOMY OF THE FIN-WHALE (*BALAENOPTERA*
INDICA) STRANDED AT MULVEL IN MARCH 1939.

Baroda City is somewhat inland, but the State has her seaboard both in Gujarat and Kathiawar: Okhamandal and Kodinar districts in the latter, and Navsari district in the former. The Kathiawar seas receive only a few rivers, like the Singoda or the Gomti, while in Gujarat as many as nine run through Baroda territory before emptying themselves in the Arabian Sea and its arm, the Gulf of Cambay. In these seas whales are not uncommon having been seen spouting, not only from steamers or fishing and other vessels but also from ashore, especially near Dwaraka and Muldwaraka.

The stranding of dead whales is, however, rare; for, so far, there are only three instances of the washing ashore of such carcasses. The earliest on record was in 1879, when a 50 ft. whale came ashore at Dwaraka opposite the Political Officer's Bungalow and very nearly caused a pestilence. In 1883 a baby whale¹ 12 ft. long was cast up on the beach at Varvala near Dwaraka. Both were eventually cut up and buried in the sandy shore. A lot of the blubber was carried away by the Dheds who ate a portion of it and converted the remainder into oil by boiling it down. In 1919 a huge whale 71 feet long was washed ashore near Tithor up the Mahisagar river.

On the 21st March 1939 the pearlfishers working in the various bays near Mulvel in Okhamandal were scared by an amazing scene, a huge *Magar Machi* splashing, spouting and struggling in the Doribid bay. Apparently in its pursuit of food it had been carried along by the treacherous currents for which the Gulf of Cutch is

¹ In the course of a discussion, Mr. Dereniyagala, Director of Fisheries, Ceylon, expressed doubts about the identity of the animal as a whale because of the small size. The old records give the size, and call the animal a whale, but throw no further light on its zoological position.